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## Tribute to Professor Peter M. Gerhart

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*Andrew Dorchak*<sup>†</sup>

On behalf of Library Director Joe Custer and the entire library staff, I offer our sincere condolences to Ann, Mary, Gracie, and the entire Gerhart family. In time, I hope you can be comforted by memories of happier times and the realization of how much of a positive impact Peter had on everyone he met, especially those of us in the law-school community who had the privilege of working with him and knowing him.

Peter was dean when I started working at the law library decades ago. His leadership helped the law school and the law library thrive in countless ways—from smooth day-to-day operation to the foresight of planning, funding, and building an addition to the law school that continues helping the school operate effectively to this day. The building addition helped the library maintain its physical collection at a time when doing so was critical. More importantly, the building addition made the law-school experience better and easier for law faculty, students, and staff. Of course, Peter would remind us that he had led a team effort and be the first to credit others on the team.

After returning to the faculty from his deanship, Peter would ask interesting and challenging research questions as he wrote a trilogy of Cambridge Press books from 2010–2021, which offered a novel approach to legal theory in three substantive areas of the law. His first book, on antitrust, was published in 1979. He was a multidisciplinary scholar, most recently incorporating philosophical works into his latest research.

Faculty and students have given many examples of how much time Peter invested in helping them. Cliff, Stan, and I were greeted with a smile by Peter for thirty years. But Peter took the time to learn everyone's name in the library and make a personal connection with them. Peter was always a strong supporter of the library, formally and informally. The best story was when Peter happened to be in Prague at the same time as library-colleague Donna's son was there. Even though he had never met her son, Peter took him out to dinner in Prague. Upon returning home to Cleveland, Peter reassured Donna that all was well, and that her son had a good head on his shoulders.

Most recently, as recounted by Dean Berg and confirmed by my personal experience, Peter offered the community encouragement during the pandemic, whether in person or by email. He was always positive and hopeful, inspiring others to be the same.

Peter was a leader, scholar, and a friend to everyone he met. As a child, my grandmother would encourage me to be “a gentleman and a

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scholar.” Thank you, Peter, for giving me the best example of a gentleman and scholar that I can only hope to emulate. Rest in peace, my friend.